

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0946

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 3077

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, NZ, SN

SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND DEFENSE MINISTER FAULKNER'S VISIT
TO SINGAPORE

1. NEW ZEALAND HIGH COMMISSIONER PEREN TOLD CHARGE,
JULY 24, THAT DEFENSE MINISTER FAULKNER'S VISIT TO
SINGAPORE HAD COME OFF SPLENDIDLY. IN ADDITION TO
SCHEDULED MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM
AND DEFENSE MINISTER GOH, FAULKNER PARTICIPATED IN
IMPROMPTU MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER LEE AT
LATTER'S REQUEST.

2. PEREN SAID PRIME MINISTER MADE IT CLEAR THAT IN VIEW
OF UNSTABLE SITUATION IN THAILAND AND INDOCHINA GOS WAS
ANXIOUS TO HAVE THE SECURITY AFFORDED BY THE FIVE-POWER
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DEFENSE AGREEMENT FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER SIX TO SEVEN

YEARS. BOTH THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND LEE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE TO THE GOS OF HAVING THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF NEW ZEALAND FORCES AS WELL AS OTHER COMMONWEALTH FORCES AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. RAJARATNAM OBSERVED THAT POSSIBLY THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION THESE FORCES PERFORMED WAS TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR U.S. NAVAL SHIPS TO VISIT SINGAPORE WITHOUT POLITICAL COMPLICATIONS. HE POINTED OUT THAT IF ALL COMMONWEALTH FORCES WERE WITHDRAWN U.S. NAVY SHIPS VISITING SINGAPORE WOULD BECOME MUCH TOO PROMINENT, AND EACH VISIT WOULD ATTRACT UNDUE PUBLIC ATTENTION. HOWEVER, AS LONG AS COMMONWEALTH NAVAL UNITS WERE STATIONED IN SINGAPORE, U.S. NAVY SHIPS COULD COME IN AND OUT WITHOUT EXCITING ATTENTION. PEREN SAID HE KNEW THAT THIS WAS A FACTOR IN GOS THINKING, BUT HE HAD NEVER HEARD THE POINT SO STRONGLY EMPHASIZED BEFORE.

3. PEREN SAID PRIME MINISTER LEE URGED AN INCREASE IN TRAINING SINGAPORE ARMY UNITS IN NEW ZEALAND, AND SAID THE GOS WOULD BE HAPPY TO PAY FOR THE COST. LEE SPECULATED THAT IT WOULD BE A GOOD MORALE BOOSTER FOR THE SAF AND THAT A PROMISED TRIP TO NEW ZEALAND FOR FURTHER TRAINING COULD BE USED AS A REWARD FOR THE MOST EFFICIENT UNITS. (COMMENT: AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, ABSENCE OF ADEQUATE TRAINING SPACE IN SINGAPORE IS SINGLE GREATEST PROBLEM CONFRONTING SAF.)

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